

Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary
445 12th Street, SW
Room TW-A325
Washington, DC 20554

Received & Inspected

NOV 23 2012

FCC Mail Room

CG Docket Nos. 03-123 and 10-51

I am writing to provide my comments on Federal Communication Commission's (FCC) Public Notice on the "Structure and practices of the video relay service (VRS) program and on proposed VRS compensation rates."

I am deaf and VRS is how I stay in touch with my family and friends who are not deaf. I'm sure that hearing people don't think about what it means to be able to pick up the phone and call anyone any time or anywhere they want. But for me, this means everything. VRS has changed my life.

I am alarmed that the FCC is proposing to dramatically change the VRS program. Why is the FCC going out of its way to fix something that isn't broken?

I think there are two crucial reasons to keep the current VRS system in place.

First, I like the company I do business with. I don't want to be forced to switch companies because the one I work with has gone out of business.

Second, I don't want to have to buy and set up my own VRS equipment. I got my equipment at no cost from my VRS provider. They installed it and continue to maintain it. It would be unfair to now shift this burden to me and other deaf people. If the government wants to prevent deaf people from connecting with others and using VRS, this is a good way to do it.

The VRS program works for people who are deaf. It's how we communicate every day with the hearing world and how the hearing world communicates with us. Any changes to the program must be in the best interest of deaf Americans. The changes being considered by the FCC are not.

Sincerely,

Name

Christa Phillips

Title, if appropriate _____

Address

4363 Maize Rd

Telephone Number

614-556-4684

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Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary
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VRS is a lifeline. It allows me to conduct business, connect with my family and friends and do many other things over the phone that many hearing people take for granted. Most important, though, VRS is how I access my local emergency 911 service. In an emergency I know that when I place a 911 call it will be answered immediately. My location will be known. And, specially trained American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters will be there to make sure my local emergency responders know exactly what help I need. You can't imagine how frightening it is to think that I might not be able to get help for me or my family because of long hold times, poorly trained interpreters, or bad equipment.

Cutting the rates paid to VRS providers as low as the FCC proposes will only reduce service quality I currently depend on. How will these companies hire and keep skilled ASL interpreters on staff when the government has just cut what they are willing to pay them by \$2 an hour? How will 911 calls be answered immediately when there are fewer interpreters and longer hold times? How will I know that my VRS will work when I'm using a videophone from WalMart instead of the specially designed videophone from my VRS provider?

I hope the FCC has answers to all of the questions before it considers changing the current system.

Sincerely,

Name Christa Phillips

Title, if appropriate _____

Address 4363 Maize Rd Col 6A 43 224

Telephone Number 64-556-4684

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VRS has created a more level playing field for people like me who are deaf or hard-of-hearing, empowering us to communicate via videophone with anyone at any time in our native language, American Sign Language. The nature of the work I do requires that I be able to use the phone to communicate with colleagues, clients and business associates regardless of whether they are hearing or deaf. Without reliable, high-quality VRS service I would not be able to do my job effectively.

The changes the FCC is considering would drastically change the nature of the VRS I depend on. One of the aspects of VRS that makes it such an effective way to communicate is the quality of the videophone technology used and the fact that the products provided by VRS companies have been developed specifically with the needs of the deaf – my needs – in mind. Yet, the FCC is considering changes that would, instead, force us to use off-the-shelf products and government-mandated software. Using products developed by and for people who are hearing would be a huge step backwards! The FCC cannot consider this to be a reasonable replacement for the high quality, specialized VRS technology we use every day.

The rate changes being considered by the FCC would also directly affect my ability to access VRS, as well as the reliability and quality of service I depend on. If the FCC slashes the rates paid to VRS providers, as suggested in its Public Notice, many companies will simply stop providing this essential service. This will put me and all members of the deaf community at a significant disadvantage.

In my view, VRS today is a shining example of what Congress intended when it passed the Americans with Disabilities Act 22 years ago. It is absolutely essential that any changes to the current program maintain the access, innovation and reliability that define VRS today.

Sincerely,

Name William E Hook

Title, if appropriate _____

Address 1145 Colony #422 Westerville OH 43081

Telephone Number 614-423-6464

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Name William E Hook

Title, if appropriate _____

Address 1165 Colony #422, Westerville, Oh 43081

Telephone Number 614 423 6464

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Name William E. Hook

Title, if appropriate _____

Address 1165 Colony #422, Westerville, Oh 43081

Telephone Number 614 423-6464
423

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The FCC has also suggested that VRS can be just as effectively provided through government-mandated software that is used on off-the-shelf equipment like common videophones, computers, the iPad, or a smart TV. While such equipment can provide a convenient backup solution, it can't replace the videophones and other technologies provided by VRS providers. These have been specifically designed to take into account the special needs of the deaf and hard-of-hearing.

If the FCC takes away skilled ASL interpreters and innovative equipment, VRS as we know it today won't exist. This would be a huge step backward for the rights and opportunities of Americans who are deaf and hard-of-hearing.

Sincerely,

Name Pam Tripp

Title, if appropriate _____

Address 13246 Pleas. Val. Rd.
ROCKBRIDGE 0 43149

Telephone Number _____

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Sincerely,

Name Debbie Ring

Title, if appropriate _____

Address 1165 Colony Drive
Westerville, Ohio 43081

Telephone Number 937-641-8343

FILED NOV 23 2012
BY: [signature]
FCC

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Sincerely,

Name Jeannie Ring

Title, if appropriate _____

Address 1165 Colony Drive Westerville, Ohio

Telephone Number 937-641-8343 43081

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Sincerely,

Name L/04 D Dortch

Title, if appropriate Keep it service

Address 557 Stewart Ave

Telephone Number 614-300-1817

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Sincerely,

Name L/Oly D Hatch
Title, if appropriate Keep it service
Address 557 Stewart
Telephone Number 614-300-1817

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LCS/BCDE

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Federal Communications Commission
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Sincerely,

Name Lloyd Hatcher

Title, if appropriate Keep service

Address 557 Stewart #10

Telephone Number 614-300-1817

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Sincerely,

Name Lloy D Hatcher

Title, if appropriate Deaf service

Address 557 Stewart Ave #10

Telephone Number 6143001817

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Sincerely,

Name MARTHA D. FRYE

Title, if appropriate _____

Address 1165 COLONY DR # 225

Telephone Number 414-423-6556

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Sincerely,

Name Fred Miller

Title, if appropriate _____

Address 1246 Pyle Rd. Clarksville, OH 45113

Telephone Number 937-289-9420

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Sincerely,

Name Glory Tolle

Title, if appropriate _____

Address 5432 Penhandle Rd. New Vienna, Ohio 45159

Telephone Number 937-364-2137

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If the FCC takes away skilled ASL interpreters and innovative equipment, VRS as we know it today won't exist. This would be a huge step backward for the rights and opportunities of Americans who are deaf and hard-of-hearing.

Sincerely,

Name Cindy Bloom

Title, if appropriate _____

Address 5909 E. New York Rd. Hillsboro, OR. 97123

Telephone Number 937.393.2496

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FCC Mail Room

CG Docket Nos. 03-123 and 10-51

I am writing to provide my comments on Federal Communication Commission's (FCC) Public Notice on the "Structure and practices of the video relay service (VRS) program and on proposed VRS compensation rates."

I am deaf and VRS is how I stay in touch with my family and friends who are not deaf. I'm sure that hearing people don't think about what it means to be able to pick up the phone and call anyone any time or anywhere they want. But for me, this means everything. VRS has changed my life.

I am alarmed that the FCC is proposing to dramatically change the VRS program. Why is the FCC going out of its way to fix something that isn't broken?

I think there are two crucial reasons to keep the current VRS system in place.

First, I like the company I do business with. I don't want to be forced to switch companies because the one I work with has gone out of business.

Second, I don't want to have to buy and set up my own VRS equipment. I got my equipment at no cost from my VRS provider. They installed it and continue to maintain it. It would be unfair to now shift this burden to me and other deaf people. If the government wants to prevent deaf people from connecting with others and using VRS, this is a good way to do it.

The VRS program works for people who are deaf. It's how we communicate every day with the hearing world and how the hearing world communicates with us. Any changes to the program must be in the best interest of deaf Americans. The changes being considered by the FCC are not.

Sincerely,

Name Clinton Blancy

Title, if appropriate VP / SVRS

Address 6012 Greenfield Rd

Telephone Number 1-513-453-4429

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Washington, DC 20554

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FCC Mail Room

CG Docket Nos. 03-123 and 10-51

I am writing in response to the Federal Communication Commission's request for comments on the "Structure and practices of the video relay service (VRS) program and on proposed VRS compensation rates." I am very concerned that the changes being considered by the FCC will destroy a program that is vitally important to people who are deaf and hard-of-hearing.

I am not deaf, but I know firsthand how VRS works. VRS allows people who are deaf or hard-of-hearing to use the "phone" to communicate comfortably and easily just like people who can hear. In this way, it has changed the lives of so many people who are deaf. With VRS they can do the things we take for granted – make a doctor's appointment, call a child's school, or simply order a pizza. VRS puts people who are deaf on a more level playing field.

The changes being considered by the FCC would undo much of this progress. VRS largely relies on highly skilled American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters. These are the people who relay the conversation between the deaf and the hearing participants. The FCC wants to drastically cut the rate they pay VRS companies for providing this service. Obviously, this will have an immediate and negative effect on the ability of VRS companies to employ and train qualified interpreters.

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If the FCC takes away skilled ASL interpreters and innovative equipment, VRS as we know it today won't exist. This would be a huge step backward for the rights and opportunities of Americans who are deaf and hard-of-hearing.

Sincerely,

Name Clinton Blancy

Title, if appropriate VP / S VRS

Address 6012 Greenfield Rd

Telephone Number 1-513 453 4429

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I am writing in response to the Federal Communication Commission's (FCC's) request for comments on the "Structure and practices of the video relay service (VRS) program and on proposed VRS compensation rates." I am very concerned about these proposals and how they will affect my family's safety.

VRS is a lifeline. It allows me to conduct business, connect with my family and friends and do many other things over the phone that many hearing people take for granted. Most important, though, VRS is how I access my local emergency 911 service. In an emergency I know that when I place a 911 call it will be answered immediately. My location will be known. And, specially trained American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters will be there to make sure my local emergency responders know exactly what help I need. You can't imagine how frightening it is to think that I might not be able to get help for me or my family because of long hold times, poorly trained interpreters, or bad equipment.

Cutting the rates paid to VRS providers as low as the FCC proposes will only reduce service quality I currently depend on. How will these companies hire and keep skilled ASL interpreters on staff when the government has just cut what they are willing to pay them by \$2 an hour? How will 911 calls be answered immediately when there are fewer interpreters and longer hold times? How will I know that my VRS will work when I'm using a videophone from WalMart instead of the specially designed videophone from my VRS provider?

I hope the FCC has answers to all of the questions before it considers changing the current system.

Sincerely,

Name Clinton Mancy

Title, if appropriate VP / S VRS

Address 6012 Greenfield Rd

Telephone Number 1-513-453-4429

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If the FCC takes away skilled ASL interpreters and innovative equipment, VRS as we know it today won't exist. This would be a huge step backward for the rights and opportunities of Americans who are deaf and hard-of-hearing.

Sincerely,

Name Virginia Tolke

Title, if appropriate _____

Address 12439 Baker St. Chino, California 91710

Telephone Number 909-628-6706

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Sincerely,

Name Sam HENSON

Title, if appropriate _____

Address Box 401 114 South St. Leesburg, OH 44130

Telephone Number 937-402-0907

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Sincerely,

Name M. Carol Roy

Title, if appropriate Mrs.

Address 43344 Honeybee Lane

Telephone Number 661-886-9215

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FCC Mail Room

CG Docket Nos. 03-123 and 10-51

I am a deaf person who uses Video Relay Services (VRS) for my communication with hearing people. VRS is a communication tool I use every day.

I am writing because I am very concerned about the Federal Communication Commission's (FCC's) recent proposals to change the way VRS works. I can't imagine life without the current services I use. I don't want to see those services change!

The Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) moved deaf people forward and opened up opportunities for us. The ADA assured deaf people (like me) that we will have access to "functionally-equivalent" communication – communication choices and services similar to those enjoyed by hearing people. To date, Video Relay Service (VRS) is the most functionally-equivalent communication service for deaf people.

I am concerned that if the FCC's proposals go into effect, I won't have what the ADA promised me – choice in my VRS equipment. I want to keep options available in choosing products that were designed for deaf people. I want choices.

I am concerned that if the FCC's proposals go into effect, I won't have a choice in my VRS provider. I don't want my calls to be routed through a centralized database that would assign my calls to different providers. Hearing people have a choice in service providers. I want a choice.

I am concerned that if the FCC's proposals go into effect and there are rate cuts for VRS providers, the quality of my service will suffer. I'm concerned that with very limited resources, VRS providers might have to make changes that would result in longer hold times and unreliable service. Hearing people have a choice to choose quality service. I don't want VRS quality to suffer because VRS providers have no choice but to cut aspects of their service.

Please fulfill the promises of the ADA! I want functional equivalency. I want choices – in equipment, providers and quality. Please ensure that the VRS services I currently enjoy are maintained.

Sincerely,

Name: William Stifter
Title:
Address: 29708 Dustin Ave., Easton, MD 21601
Telephone Number: 443-746-3798

By signing this document, you are filing an official FCC proceeding. All information submitted, including names and addresses, will be publicly available via the web.

Wm J. Stifter

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Sincerely,

Name: *ALICE B STIFTER*

Title: *MRS*

Address: *29768 DUSTIN AVE, EASTON MD 21601*

Telephone Number: *443 746 - 3798*

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Alice B Stifter

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Sincerely,

Name NATHAN PETERSON

Title, if appropriate SON OF DEAF PARENTS!

Address 4047 EDGEWOOD DRIVE CRYSTAL MN 55422

Telephone Number 952-484-0978

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